



News Release

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COVID-19 infections among children and youth slowing after months of steady growth

Pediatric vaccine availability highly anticipated to slow spread of virus in kids

OLYMPIA – With the arrival of vaccines for children ages 5-11, a new report from the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) shows the level of COVID-19 spread among the state's youngest residents. Statewide, COVID-19 rates in children and youth increased rapidly from July 2021 to mid-September followed by a decrease in recent weeks.

The new [COVID-19 Cases Among Children and Youth in Washington report](#) provides a weekly update on COVID-19 cases among young people 0 to 19 years old. Data are broken down by age and by the nine educational service district (ESD) regions in Washington state.

According to the report, there were 8,029 cases of COVID-19 reported among children and youth in Washington state from October 10 to October 24, 2021. During this time, 11-13 year-olds had the highest case rates. The highest case rates in children and youth were seen in northeast Washington.

Cases are assigned to an ESD region based on the individual's home address. Children and youth with COVID-19 include all individuals living within an ESD's jurisdiction who are 0-19 years old, regardless of where they actually learn. This includes:

- students who attend a public or private school in the ESD region,
- students who are homeschooled,
- youth who reside in a juvenile correctional facility, and
- all other children and youth.

“While schools are taking precautions to prevent the spread of the virus, understanding the burden of the disease among all children and youth can help families, communities, ESDs, school districts, and schools better prepare and respond to shifting needs,” said Lacy Fehrenbach, MPH, Deputy Secretary of Health, COVID-19 Response.

“It’s thrilling to know that the strongest form of protection is now available to school-aged kids—and that’s the vaccine,” said Umair A. Shah, MD, MPH, Secretary of Health. “The more children who are vaccinated, the fewer outbreaks and cases we’ll see in the younger age groups and the less spread among their families.”

The report will be published every Wednesday on the [DOH Data Dashboard](#) web page, along with numerous other reports and COVID-19 data.

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